



# *The Insider*

[www.senate.mi.gov/switalski](http://www.senate.mi.gov/switalski)

## **Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10**

**April 2, 2004**

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and for giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing, while keeping true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at [senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov) or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a library near you. Call my office and make an appointment, or you can just walk in. See page 4 for the schedule.

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### **Canadian trash bills signed into law**

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Michigan's days of being considered the Great Lakes Regional trash can will hopefully be numbered as Governor Granholm recently signed into law a package of bills that would create tougher standards for trash entering the state.

It has been widely reported that the waste industry is expected to file a lawsuit against the state, challenging these bills on the grounds that the state has overstepped its bounds by regulating interstate and foreign commerce, of which Congress has exclusive authority over.

The bills were designed to withstand a legal challenge as it does not specifically ban the importing of out of state trash.

However, it does ban certain items such as pop cans, beer bottles, old tires, lead-acid batteries and radioactive waste from Michigan's landfills and would require landfills to refuse waste that did not meet the state's waste standards.

The package of bills would also increase the fines for violators and would give the Department of Environmental Quality the ability to issue an emergency order banning out of state trash under certain conditions.

The bills would also place a two-year moratorium on the construction of new landfills and would increase the inspection of landfills.

Currently, federal legislation has been introduced that would ban shipments of Canadian trash and would also give states more authority to regulate trash. These bills have yet to be considered by the U.S. House of Representatives.

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## **SB 76 Post-card Tax Form**

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The clock is ticking. Time is running is out.

Tick! Tock!

With each passing moment, the most dreaded day of the year comes closer.

April 15, Tax Day, is just around the corner.

While many Michiganders are struggling with the ever-complex and seemingly never-ending length of their current tax forms, I want to make it easier for taxpayers to file their income taxes.

I introduced Senate Bill 76, which would create a post-card sized 1040 income tax form.

The bill would provide a taxpayer the option of either filling out an easy to use, six-line form the size of a post-card or staying up all night, racking their brains, and pulling out what little hair they have left, as they fill out the existing 1040 form.

The post-card sized form would include space for the filing status, adjusted gross income, the number and amount of exemptions, the taxable income, the tax owed, the tax withheld, the amount of refund and the amount of tax due to the state.

Do the math. What would you rather do? I think tax forms should be as simple as possible.

The Senate Finance Committee held a hearing on my bill March 24. The Department of Treasury raised concerns that the form might prove too popular to taxpayers and would impede their efforts at getting more people to file electronically.

I agree. I believe that tax time is never a fun time of the year and I am sure that you feel the same. The least the state can do is to make things easier. While we would encourage people to e-file, there are still a good many that choose to file by paper. Both methods should be simplified to make it more convenient for taxpayers to file.

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## **Appliance Service Repair Program**

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The Consumers Energy appliance service program will continue as the Michigan House passed a substitute version of Senate Bill 612 earlier this week. The Michigan Senate confirmed the changes and the bill is heading to Governor Granholm for her signature.

The Senate passed SB 612 last year but the House didn't follow suit, instead passing HB 5188 which would temporarily extend the sunset date for the program to July 1.

The House Energy and Technology Committee said they wanted more time to consider how to handle the program, which had been opposed by small business groups that fear erosion of business to heating and cooling companies.

The comprise would allow a utility such as Consumers Energy to continue to operate its appliance service plan as long as there is a clear separate accounting between the appliance service program and Consumer's gas and electric business.

The bill also states that Consumers can not promote its appliance service plan with inserts in its utility bill and would not allow Consumers to turn off a person's electrical or gas service if they do not pay the appliance service plan bill.

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## **Join the Fight Against Cancer**

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Cancer is an illness that affects everyone in some way. It may be someone you know, such as a loved one, a spouse, a sibling, a friend. Cancer can also be lethal as it is the second leading cause of death in the United States.

Sterling Heights Mayor Richard Notte and I are teaming up for a second consecutive year in the effort to raise money for the American Cancer Society in their battle against cancer.

Last year, Mayor Notte and I raised over \$5,000 at the annual Relay for Life walk-a-thon fundraiser. This year we hope to raise even more but we need your help.

The Relay for Life will take place on May 22 and May 23 at Chippewa Valley High School, located at 18300 19 Mile Road in Clinton Township. The event will be begin at 10 a.m. on May 22 and will feature a 24-hour walk-a-thon with at least one member of each relay team staying on the track at all times.

If you would like to help, I will be collecting donations on behalf of the American Cancer Society in support of the "Relay for Life". Checks can be mailed to: Relay for Life, c/o Senator Michael Switalski, 28311 Utica Road, Roseville, MI 48066.

Your help would be greatly appreciated. Together, we can make strides in the search for a cure to cancer.

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## **Mickey's TV Insider Show**

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Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

### **Sterling Heights**

Every Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m.  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Utica**

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Clinton Township**

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Roseville**

Every other Tuesday at 6:05 p.m.  
(Comcast Channel 18)

\*Please note that Sterling Heights/Utica/Clinton Township will show the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 5 and Wide Open West Channel 10. Clinton Township will air the TV Insider Show at various

times during the last week of every month. Roseville can see the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 18.

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### Coffee Hours

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\*Please note that since the District Office is in Roseville, I do not have coffee hours in Roseville. I encourage you to visit the Roseville office. We even have a coffee pot. For those that wish to attend the coffee hours in Clinton Township, please note that I will be at the new Clinton-Macomb Public Library, located at the corner of Romeo Plank and Canal Road on April 26.

#### **Clinton Township**

**Apr. 26- (NOTE NEW LOCATION)**

Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
40900 Romeo Plank  
7-9 P.M.

**May 24**

Clinton Township Public Library  
35891 Gratiot, north of 15 Mile  
7-9 P.M.

#### **Sterling Heights/Utica**

**Apr. 5, May 3**  
**7-9 P.M.**

Location: Sterling Heights Library  
(Utica and Dodge Park roads)

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### Contact My Office

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**Website:** <http://www.senate.mi.gov/switalski>

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#### **Lansing Office**

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#### **District Office**

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Monday through Friday  
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(586)774-2430  
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